

We Were Born In The Valley by **deardmvz**

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Genre: Billy Hargrove Redemption, Billy dies, Harringrove, M/M, Soft Billy Hargrove, Steve Harrington is a Sweetheart, billy and steve live together, billys mom is probably chilling somewhere in cali, but ta da by magic hes back, i give you utter fluff

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Summary:

I wrote this back in April & never really posted it anywhere so - enjoy a favorite piece of writing of mine.

Song is The Valley by The Oh Hello's. I'd recommend listening to it before reading

We Were Born In The Valley

*"We were born in the valley
Of the dead and the wicked"*

When Billy comes to Hawkins, he's from the valleys of California. Places only heard about in magazines, in fancy brochures. He says he's been all over Cali, telling wild stories to girls from the hood of his flashy car. A cigarette tangled in his fingers, golden locks glowing like he's got magical powers in them.

He talks fondly of it all, the one time he seems pleasant. When he's talking about *home*, where the sunsets were on a beach or over a vast field of orange poppies. Where seagulls were natives, and the beach scene never died.

He never talks about Hawkins or anyone in it like he talks about California, USA.

He talked and talked about the place like he had lived there for centuries, a god who had implanted themselves into the state and never wanted to leave.

The dead and the wicked made him though. Uprooted his feet by force, dragged him on a cross country trip in a blue camaro that was bought last minute off a sleazy lot.

"It's cheap dad- it's once in a lifetime, *please*-"

"Fine. But you're driving it to Hawkins, and you are dealing with it."

The one time the dead and the wicked allowed him some joy. Windows rolled down as they pass the last poppy field and head further into the next state over, red hair in the passenger seat and a skateboard in the back. Quiet for once while The Beatles sang on the stereos, crackling through on a dusty cassette that came with the car.

*"That our father's father found
And where we laid him down"*

Neil found Hawkins, Indiana. Said it was a good small town, near Susan's family.

God, fuck that family. And Billy's step-grandmother, the religious priss, who handed him a silver ring. A small cross on the inside.

"For good luck with the lord in your new town, William."

He almost took it off and threw it into her begonia garden on the way out that Easter Sunday, but he left it on. Figured he could pawn off the shit for some new tires on the camaro, maybe even keep the ring for a while since it looked nice on his finger.

He ended up keeping the silver band, deep down hoping maybe she would be right. Maybe big J.C. up there will bring him some good luck with the town. And the school, and the dad, and the step mom, and the new step sister. The everything really. So he kept the ring on.

He found out it didn't do much after a few more of Neil's punches but he kept wearing it. It looked cool anyways.

He for sure knew the ring was a crock of shit though when he almost lost while the creatures of the Upside Down dragged him into hell. Laid down by them, big ego bulldozed like a wrecking ball to an abandoned skyscraper. Tearing it apart, exposing the metal work underneath.

The fear of a father who beats him at home, a mother lost to divorce and time, repressed feelings, and a sister who seemed to never just stay fucking put.

The monsters tore off the exteriors and left Billy cold, exposed and a scared little kid as they took control of his person like he was some video game character they could play. The ring was nothing but a hunk of cold metal on his hands as the creature made him and Heather Holloway drink drain cleaner. Made him drag people down for the face clinger looking tentacles to latch onto their faces. Their lurching, horrible, wet sucking sounds as the Mindflayer practically de-brained these people through the nostrils.

He watched it all and wondered if the ring would ever hold up to the promise his new grandmother had made.

*"We were born in the shadow
Of the crimes of our fathers
Blood was our inheritance
No, we did not ask for this"*

It was the eve of July 4th, 1985.

Billy was looking down at her. Tears rolling down both of their faces as fireworks exploded, her gentle hand on his cheek.

She's just a kid, maybe 13.

She's seen her. His mom.... she said she was beautiful. He can't help but to agree. He thinks for a moment about the kid and then his mom. He decides its not this little girls time, despite everything the wicked beast that's possessed him says. She's no threat to humanity or creature of darkness.

She's just a little girl.

A soft summery song is coming on in his head, gently playing as he smiles at the girl. It's one he heard while walking down the beach, taking him back to California as he's placing the kids hand down off his cheek and onto her stomach. Using his own hands to get himself up, his own stomach churning as he stands. The voices in his head that are singing and blocking out the noise soothe it though.

Moms gonna be here soon, don't worry Billy. She'll bring you down to the first aid tent & we'll clean you up. Why don't you focus on our song?

He nods, agreeing with them. Focus on the song, where they sing in a soft tone, about waves rolling by and heaven. Little voices, to a slow melody that's played on what sounds like a combination of a beachy electric guitar and a ukulele, a gentle drum beat backing it up. They sound like angels singing.

The more he thinks about it, they probably are angels.

The singing helps him walk, going up to the creature as they keep going in his head.

The Mindflayer's staring him down, now lifting him up off the ground with a tentacle. It hurts, but he thinks about it like a shot. He always hated them so bad as a kid but *Mom's gonna be here to kiss it better William, don't worry.*

Soon the others are hitting his back and sides. Hot pain, god. They fucking hurt so bad. Tears are rolling out.

Last one, big needle. It's all over after this though, okay? Just this last one and we're done.

He takes a deep breath and as he exhales it hits him.

It's like he got a hot poker shoved into his chest, those toothy claws ripping at his internal organs and popping his lungs like birthday balloons.

He cuts into the music for a second as he screams, but the tentacle comes out fast along with the others. Dropping him to the ground, the music coming back. He feels his head starting to fall backwards and his visions blurring, fireworks exploding above in the empty mall.

It's almost beautiful.

He starts to see Santa Cruz as his eyes fill with tears. New image coming in clearer and clearer as he drifts.

The beach on the 4th of July, 1979, his mom next to him. A little red snow cone in his hand, her arm around him.

Pointing at the fireworks going off above, over the water. Reflected down as they explode in a blazing glory, beautiful colors painting the sky. Coming to their big finish of the night.

"Billy?!" An outside voice cries, feeling far away. He keeps his eyes on the sky, leaning into his mom a little more.

"I'm sorry." He feels his lips say.

The last firework explodes above them and begins to fade, his vision going with it too as he descends into a darkness that holds finality.

"Will you lead me?

*We were young when we heard you call
Our names in the silence"*

When Billy is waking up, there's no fireworks.

He's reborn on a Spring day. Out in a field, where he wakes up like a baby deer just birthed.

He's no deer though, hand raising up. It's definitely his, silver ring on the middle finger of his left hand like always. Little braided band in the middle, cross on the inside.

Maybe big old J.C. was giving him some good luck. He still has no idea where he is though. Just knows it's warm, it's some big field on a hill that's overlooking some town. He's got his boots and jeans on, and feels a little dirty.

He begins to stand, wobbling a little as he does so. His legs feel almost new, his arms as well. Like he's been reconstructed, or like he's been out of his body for forever and is just waking up. Last he knows it was summer, and he doesn't think he's been out long. Maybe an hour or two? A day at the most, surely.

He's up now, white wife beater rolling down his stomach. It looks like it's been covered in dirt or mud, like he was rolling around in it till the top of it seems to be plastered to him. Billy looks backwards, eyebrow raised as a mound of dirt and a shabby wooden cross stares him back. A grave of some sort... hand made, placed in a daisy field that overlooks a town. He turns back to the town now, trying to figure it out.

The big, oddly shaped "PALACE ARCADE" sign gives it away.

Hawkins.... He's still in Hawkins, Indiana. God he wishes he could have at least woken up clueless in California. Like some weird hangover situation, out on the beach drunk with no memory. Just

some random coins and maybe an ID that made no sense. But no, it had to be Hawkins.

He groans and starts to walk down the hill, to the nearest civilization.

*"Like a fire in the dark
Like a sword upon our hearts"*

He barely knows Hawkins, but he knows Steve Harrington's house. The palace of keg stands and random chicks mingling around, a swanky two story palace with a half circle driveway and a BMW in the garage. A mailbox that seemed to never be checked, and a lawn that was always manicured by some Hawkins middle schooler. '*Child labor at its finest*' He huffs.

Steve Harrington's house might as well be a Hawkins landmark, Billy walking briskly down the Loch Nora road without a care in the world. The routes ingrained in his head from driving down here on late nights in the camaro, wondering if he should kill the car and get out. Jump in Steve's window on the second floor and scare the shit out of him... maybe see if he'll do other stuff too.

He never did though, just watched it from across the street before pulling away from the curb and back out onto the road and circling the rest of town like a vulture who had nothing to do. Looking for roadkill, something to keep himself entertained.

Most nights it was keg parties, but on others, he found nothing but parking out in the quarry. Waiting under the stars till they faded away and the sun came up, and it was time to go back home.

Now though he's not going anywhere, and there's no camaro in sight, and he's dead set on the Harrington's house.

There's no silver Porsche or baby blue Mercedes to indicate Mommy

or Daddy Harrington are home, so Billy feels safe as he walks up the driveway, BMW sitting there like it hasn't moved in weeks, a thin layer of pollen coating it.

Maybe Stevie Wonder was biking to work now? Billy rolled his eyes at it though, finger swiping at the pollen before he goes to the door stoop. Knocks on the door with its lion knocker, and stands back and waits.

Harrington will probably freak the fuck out to see him there and expect a fight or something. Maybe he'll give it to him, get back at him for Byer's place. Then go use his bathroom and steal one of his shirts to replace whatever dirty and... maybe bloody mess is happening on his. It's not like Steve can't replace it.

Billy knocks again, impatient. Then waits a minute and starts pounding on the door.

If Steve isn't here Billy swears to god he'll-

"WHAT?" Steve swings the door open, hair messed up beyond belief. A red bathrobe on, slippers too. Toothbrush half hanging out of his mouth, or well, was, until it falls. Now his mouth is hanging open and he looks so incredibly dumb in that loveable way Billy despises.

"What? Do I have maggots coming out of my face? Let me the fuck in Harrington."

Steve's probably half asleep right now, hence the dumbstruckness. Not expecting a fight.

"You're...." he gestured at Billy, arms swinging wildly, "ALIVE?!"

Billy rolls his eyes. "Never fuckin' died man. Dunno where you got that idea, Pretty Boy. Now let me in."

"No!! I have to call the party I- *STAY RIGHT THERE!*" He's running back, towards the landline in the living room. What the fuck is up with him?

Judging by the car and the amounts of fucked up he looks, probably some drinking bender. He has wide eyes and dark circles as he stares at Billy, anxiously waiting. Hands reaching down around the corner out of Billy's sight, seeming to grab something by its handle. Billy thinks he's overreacting and out of his god damn tree.

He stays though, not wanting to meet whatever Steve is holding.

*"We came down to the water
And we begged for forgiveness"*

Max, Lucas, Dustin, Robin, Joyce, Eleven, Jonathan, Mike, Will, and whoever the fuck else cause it seems like Steve's invited the entire town, are over within an hour. That along with some sort of official government looking people, which confuses him even more.

"Where did you wake up?"

"In some fucking field, with dirt and a cross. I- hey get that the fuck out of my face!" He smacks away a flashlight that's being shined in his eyes, snapping a little as another doctor backs up.

"Interesting." The original man states before writing shit down on his little lab chart. Billy feels like a science experiment all of a sudden, regretting coming to Steve's place. He wishes he'd just beat him up and gotten to look in the mirror real quick before he snatched a shirt and left (none of which he has gotten to do. Only sit on the couch and being rambled at by some nonsensical Steve whos weilding a nail bat like Billy was going to axe murder him).

Nothing is being explained to him and it's pissing him off, the kids just staring at him. Max looking like she's seen a ghost, stuck on Joyce's side.

Everyone looks... older. Which is weird. Maybe he hit his head and he just cant remember their faces from a few days ago correctly. Lucas looks taller than Max by a significant amount though, and the little girl is there. He vaguely remembers her face and something to do with...fireworks? He just knows she's for sure Max's friend and has stayed over at their house. But now she dressed weird, in some mismash of a grown mans flannel, slicked back hair with dark eyeshadow, a pair of those high waisted mom jeans that were all the

rage with girls, and a boys polo underneath. Converse with scribbles on them too.

Max also looks different. Hair's chopped significantly... maybe she got a haircut sometime yesterday? It doesn't entirely make sense but hey she's irrational and does spur of the moment stuff.

What's weirder though is seeing his jacket on her, along with St. Christopher's pendant around her necklace. Hand clutching it... it doesn't make sense.

He's only been out for a week at the most now he figures. No way he could survive longer than a week just out in the wild, asleep. Or maybe he went on a bender of his own that blacked him out for a month, just running on autopilot? He doesn't know how that would happen though, but he guesses that maybe it could make sense.

Everyone looks different though and its freaking him out a little lot.

"What year is it?" He asks a woman who looks like a doctor. He feels like he's in one of those time travel movies, or like he's about to be told he was in a coma.

"1986, dear. April 9th and its... 1:00 PM. Supposed to have nice weather till the weekend." Her smile is kind, seeming stupid to Billy shock.

Its months, *fucking seasons*, passed July of 1985. He's been out of it for forever.... it makes so much sense, but how. And why the fuck was this happening?

"What happened to me?"

"I can't answer that dear. Sorry."

It all seems to spiral from there as Billy leans back. No ability to know much about himself past maybe the last week of June and the beginning of July. He feels like shit too now that he thinks about, wanting to curl up into a little ball with a cigarette. Get the doctors off of him, who are busy checking him down while they tilt his head

up, examining his eyes and then putting his shirt up and down and feeling his heartbeat. Like he's a lab rat.

He wishes he'd just laid back down and went back to sleep on his dirt pile.

It was decided hours later that he'd be staying with Steve.

Nobody outside of their small group is to know anything or be contacted, which included Neil and Susan not knowing. Billy felt a little luckier as Max is led home, not even saying a word to him as she leaves. Just plastered to creepy Byer's mom and staring with saucer eyes. He almost does a little "what" gesture at her and flips her off, but something deep down says she might cry if he does. So he doesn't. Just glanced over sometimes, mainly focused on the doctors in his face.

Watched her go out the door to leave him alone in the house with nervous Steve Harrington, who couldn't stop biting his nails.

"You hungry?"

"I want to shower." He was hungry but he hated the gritty feeling he had more. Like he'd been buried in the ground or something and unearthed. Like a little tree sprouting up, except it was 175 lb Billy Hargrove and he was no sproutling.

"Oh- yeah sure. This way, I'll get you clothes."

Steve led him up the stairs and into a bathroom. Lights off, Billy nodding and closing the door behind him as he flicked the lights on.

Turned to face himself in the mirror.

His face looked like it was stained, pale, dead. Almost a purple tint to it... California tan leaving him. Had he been underground or something? He looked like a fucking corpse, hair a mess and matted in places, straw like in others.

The white tank top looked like blood was over it, peeling it up as the thing seemed to dump more dirt everywhere as it went. Pulling it over his head and moving to face the shower, pulling it off and tossing it into a heap in the corner. Turning the knob of the weird metal dial, making sure it would be warm before he pulled the shower curtain.

Sighed and turned back to the mirror.

Facing his chest and the giant, supernova exploding scars on it.

The gurgling lurch. The sound of sucking, like it was swallowing.

The metalworks factory.

The fireworks.

The girl in the living room.

The death.

He fell, and fell, and fell until he black out collapsed on white tiles.

*"Shadows lurking close behind
We were fleeing for our lives"*

Billy remembered it all within a week.

Figured out that the 'pile of dirt' had been his grave, and Max was freaked the fuck out because here was her dead brother, walking around casually. The one who was marked as missing in action, who she knew was buried up on the hill in Hawkins. Said to be someone's dead dog named Fido- fucking Fido. They said his grave was the

burial spot of some dog who they couldn't even bother to give a clever name.

Steve was much less on edge though, which was a plus. They sat now on the couch, side by side. Usually Billy in Steve's mom's robe, the one he'd been wearing when they'd met again last week. Billy quickly came to be attached to it's plushness.

Billy normally would have dreaded and wished himself dead early over the thought of being stuck with Steve 'The Hair' Harrington but... this wasn't too bad.

He got to use the hot tub in the house, and was usually bitching to Steve as he was made to take medication. Medication he was forced to take in order make sure he would recover, while the 'government people' tried to understand how Billy Hargrove got exhumed from the earth like he was a magical little flower. Budding up out of his grave and walking off his death like nothing. Reborn in spring like the daisies and marigolds, like his step grandmothers flower gardens.

Besides from the medication and hot tub, Steve himself was also pretty decent. Yeah he was fucking annoying at times with his sloppy eating and his horrible table manners but shit, he was pretty chill when you hung out with him by force for a while.

He could actually cook too, which was surprising. Billy pegged him as a mommys boy, relying on Poptarts and Captain Crunch till she came home to feed her sweet little Stevie.

"Nah, she can't cook for shit. She burns toast- *toast!* I was gonna die if I didn't teach myself to do it."

He gestures to the eggs on the pan, a little towel thrown over his shoulder as he plays with the edge of another egg, seeing if its ready. This was how most mornings started, Steve cooking breakfast with his little towel, and Billy sitting in Mrs. Harrington's robe, hopped up on the counter like it was a seat made specially for him. Always used

the excuse that the dining room was too far away and he didn't wanna drag a chair around.

The truth was that he just liked seeing Steve from his angle, plus sometimes he got confident enough to reach a hand out and fix his morning bed head.

The little summery angels voice song coming back into his head whenever he did so, smile tugging at the edges of his lips. These were moments of bliss as he sat up on the marble counter and Steve cooked, chattering to each other like they were childhood best friends.

Steve taking care of Billy, and Billy for once letting him. Too tired to resist, too in love with the feeling to fight it.

When Steve was sitting there across from him, making food, brushing his teeth, watching a movie, doing his hair- whatever- it was the closest he'd ever felt to California. Where he was back on the Santa Cruz boardwalk with his mom, about to go ride the Ferris Wheel. The feeling of his little beach angels singing, the warmth of summer hugging him up, and pure happiness. Nothing to taint it, not even the newfound scars on his body. The ones Steve looked over fondly, smiling with a *"They're sick as fuck."*

An endearing phrase he'd learned from Maxine apparently.

Enough to make Billy worry less, knowing only one person would see them and that one special person thought they were cool.

Everything here feels good. Like he isn't running anymore, not fleeing for his life.

Yeah, there's still nightmares about Neil and the Mindflyer. But he can wake up, sweaty and terrified, and there's Harrington. Somehow always there, hushing him back into sleep. He stays at his side, hands him a massive stuffed elephant to keep in the bed.

"I know it's stupid but- it helps okay? Dumbo helps." Billy is too shaky to disagree, just tangling his arms up in soft fluff and gripping it till he feels grounded. Steves fingers going through his hair, like his mom had, carding through his curls with a tranquility that soon

soothes him back to sleep.

"Will you lead me?"

After a month, Billy's made his way into Steve's bed, with Dumbo over in the corner. When the nightmares started to get bad again (usually it's near the beginning of the month, like an anniversary), Billy moved to the other's bed. They curled up on the king sized mattress, that Harrington of course had, and Billy was soothed to sleep. Arms wrapped around him, Steve's nose in the crook of his neck. Dumbo within arms reach if needed, but normally Steve's arm was good enough.

Kept him anchored to reality, where he could feel the warmth behind him and remember. It wasn't real. Just a dream. And when he woke up, Steve would be right there. And in the morning, they'd get up and make pancakes. Blueberry chocolate chip ones, where Billy got to pour as much syrup as he wanted on them. Groan over how good they were and try to sloppily drink the orange juice straight out of the carton, leaving the fridge door open too.

Get a slap on the wrist as Steve told him he can't because 'you're gonna get syrup everywhere and it's gonna be fucking sticky! Look at the fridge handle c'mon-'

And too which Billy would just grin and start to walk off, still drinking, before Steve was chasing after him. The two running, Steve trying to pry the carton back from his devilish clutches. Save it from the syrupy, gross mess of Billy.

He was always too late though, Billy making it around the house and back to the kitchen as Steve was slipping on his socks trying to catch up. Putting the carton back with syrup covered fingers as Steve yelled at him not to.

He did it anyways. It was fucking hilarious to see Steve get so worked up and the exasperated, with the *'Do you really have to do that?'* face

he made. And one day as he's chasing Billy through the house, this time over an orange that Billy is trying to eat out of the trash (*because what the fuck is expiration? It looks mainly orange & its kinda squishy too now which is awesome*), Billy doesn't get to make his full loop.

While Steve's chasing after him, he reaches out as they get to the living room. Grabs Billy by the *LIFEGUARD ON DUTY* hoodie he's wearing and tackles him down for the first time. Billy's feet go flying, a weird yelp coming out of him as he goes down with Steve into the living room carpeting. Orange fumbling out of his hands, rolling across the tan shag like a stray soccer ball. Stopping a few feet away.

Billy's arm goes shooting for it but he's trapped down by Steve, a hand of his going to Billy's wrist. The rest of him sitting on his chest, a knee raised to pin him by the shoulder.

"No. I'm not letting you have that *rancid* orange."

Rancid. A new word he learned from Robin, which he won't stop saying to describe Billy's gross habits. Billy considered just renaming himself to Rancid after day 2 of it.

"Oh? You gonna try to stop me pretty boy?"

"I have you right now. I am not letting you touch it dude, its gross. You don't know what's in that."

"It's clearly just pulp and shit. That's what's in it- *you just don't like him because he's ugly*." Billy has decided he's going to up the ante in this game their playing, making his orange a person.

"Him? How do you not know its a girl orange? And I like a lot of ugly things." Steve retorts, leaning in closer. Billy attempts to wiggle his arm free, but Steve doesn't let up. Asshole.

"Like what?" Billy shoots back, smug smirk plastered to him.

"Your ugly face."

And it seems to go silent for a moment, and then Steve's leaning a little closer. Letting up off his arm as Billy strains to reciprocate the

movement. And then their coming together. Meeting in the middle, morning coming through an open window and brushing up Billy's hairs on the back of his neck. A gentle breeze, spring pushing him and Steve in their delicate kiss. Moving together in a moment of peace as the beach angels sing happily, slow melody changing to be about love, their electric guitar ukuleles upbeat. Like their cheering them on, like this is a movie kiss where the two characters have finally come together.

Billy can't help it as he move his arm back a little and find the orange, and bring it up. Smacks it against Steves temple and lets the mushy pulp and juice slide out, a laugh escaping his mouth and bubbling into Steve's lips.

Their breaking apart as the brunette groans, but there is a smile on his face still. He expected this from Billy. It's the most him thing he could do in the situation, in the middle of their big first kiss.

"Fuck you Billy."

"Yeah- *fuck me* dude."

Steves laughing as he brings him back for another kiss and to go rolling back to the floor. Orange discarded to the side to be cleaned up later.

On a spring day in 1986, on Steve Harrington's living room floor, Billy Hargrove is reborn again.